

MASSACHUSETTS FARMER.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, FOR THE BENEFIT OF FARMERS AND MECHANICS, AT QUINCY HALL, SOUTH MARKET STREET, WM. BUCKMINSTER, OF FRAMINGHAM, EDITOR.

VOL. 10.

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AGRICULTURE.

SCHOOLING.

Now is the season for schooling. It is now that farmers can spare their boys and let them have a chance to improve their minds. Many can afford to spare their children for half the year, but farmers generally cannot—three months each year, from ten to eighteen years of age, will give a child ample opportunity to obtain a good English education.

We are not saying that three months each year will be sufficient if parents are not on their guard and attempt to prevent or to punish the practice of playing truant in the school hours. In large towns much time is spent in this way, and it is the fault of parents and guardians that it is so spent. When any suspicion arises that children loiter on the way, or do not attend it is quite easy to require them to produce a written excuse to be presented for every delinquency.

We urge this scrutiny into the conduct of school children with the more earnestness because parents are not always apprised of the faults that are committed on time, and because children are no judges of the value of it. Time now lost can never be regained, for youth is the only time, generally speaking, when the rudiments of education can be acquired. We are earnest to impress on the minds of all that the simple art of reading and spelling correctly can be acquired only in years of youth. Yet when reading and spelling have been so taught that the pupil can perform both with facility, important knowledge of all kinds may be gained at any time, in mature years. Milk for babies and sucklings—afterwards means may be devised.

Let not the youth of our country neglect the little opportunity they are offered of free schooling. We have been so much habituated to this privilege in the New England States that we are apt to think more lightly of it than we otherwise should. In more than half the country the wealthy have never been taxed in the country districts, to support free schools till within a year or two past. The struggles of the true patriots there to establish free schools throughout the State have been arduous and of many months duration, and the opposition to the measure has been so formidable that the legislature, at its last session, submitted the question to the people, to be decided at their election in November last. And they have decided it in the affirmative—more than 20,000 majority were found in favor of taxing all the people for the education of all, both poor and rich.

The boon should not be slighted. Our own countrymen, parents ought to impress on their children's minds the advantages they enjoy compared with people in a more rude state of society—in States where the rich are unwilling to pay a farthing towards the education of any but their own offspring or dependants.

We now call the attention of our young men in particular to this important subject. You all expect at some future date, to be engaged in business of more or less importance. You all may be invited to serve and take your turn in some town or State office. Not one of you can fairly plead that you had no means of education in the time of your youth. This plea might have been made by many of our fathers who were bred in times of revolution and of destitution. But this plea will not avail you now or hereafter, while freedom is cherished in our favored country.

We call on you all to qualify yourselves for town office if for nothing more. It is not right that the Select Office and the Assessors office should be a burden to a few individuals in a town for want of qualifications in the great body of farmers and mechanics. All should be qualified to take their turn and look to the expenditures of the public money. And for these offices a good school education is very necessary, if not absolutely necessary. But we would not have the views of our young men limited to town or State offices. There are other subjects which press upon them with more intense interest. Their minds should be improved, and without some little smattering of literature there is but little chance of improvement. Every voter should be able to write and to read his own vote, and were we to legislate for his country whatever we would let no man who could neither read nor write cast a vote for a ruler of the land. Demagogues might complain for want of matter to feed on—for want of combustibles to set the community in a flame—but reflecting minds would all sanction such a rule in a country where all have the means, without money and without price, of all that the laborer has. This is a case in which every man is interested—rich and poor—high and low—all are concerned in the basis on which government is founded.

A secondary consideration is the qualification of a man to transact business—to send written communications to a distance. To write legibly and to spell correctly. To point and mark off distinct parts of a communication. Grammarians call it Punctuation.

Long and fatiguing rules have been laid down in spelling books to teach the art of punctuation—a science we believe some of the wisest call it. Well, they have made so much of the science that there is a doubt in many minds whether their nature and complicated rules have not done more harm than good—as many of their English grammar rules evidently have.

We dwell particularly on this point because we find many writers who in despair of understanding the rules of punctuation neglect them wholly. They begin at the top of a sheet; and write to the bottom without coming to a single stop, or giving a reader any hint when he may pause to take a little breath.

Plain good sense is sufficient to teach any one who can make a mark with a pen that stops ought to be made in all discourses of considerable length. Skillful writers make frequent pauses—the principal ones are in the middle of periods. A comma (,) is used when the pause is slight one. A period (.) is used at the end of a sentence to mark that the writer has come to a full stop.

It is not prudent for an inexperienced writer to make very long sentences. Young writers frequently commit this error, and the sense of what they write is often obscure. Short sentences are

more easily read and understood. We often imagine that writers who neglect to make stops test they may be thought guilty of violating certain technical rules concerning them. Let all such technical rules be forgotten. Every writer has a right to make stops wherever he pleases—and that he will always oblige his readers by making them frequently.

There is another rule that printers always require to be observed if you wish to have your communication divided off into Sections. You should not only make a period, (.) you should commence the first line of a new section at a little distance from the left hand margin of the paper. When you do this the printer will do the same, and the reader will find relief in seeing distinct paragraphs containing perhaps a dozen or twenty lines. It is exceedingly tiresome to read a whole page, even when there are periods or full stops made, if there is no division into sections—that is, if there is a mass of lines of equal length and no vacancy left to rest on or to start from on a distinct part of the subject.

Now these rules ought to be learned in our common schools, but they will not be learned to any profit unless the scholar is made to apply them in practice. They are like the rules of grammar—of no kind of use unless they are understood—and they are seldom understood unless they are immediately put in practice under the eye of the teacher.

It is a shame that so few people can write well compared with the numbers that have the benefit of our free schools. We would not be understood to say a young man can write well before he has learned to spell the words that usually occur, or the words he makes use of.

The art of spelling must be learned in youth. Never think of relying on a dictionary to guide you in writing common words. You may need to write when you have not a dictionary at hand, and then what will you do?

Young farmers must write as well as read. They ought to write for the press. They have much to learn and many inquiries to make. By means of the press they can communicate with thousands in a day.

Young men, now is your time to fit yourselves for the duties of life. Love not an hour in idleness. The winter evenings are long, yet there is no time to spare. The reflection that you have spent the day and the evening usefully will give you a better night's rest than the remembrance of any folly you may have committed at any time in life.

INCREASE OF THE MANURE HEAP.

There has been a good time since harvesting to carry articles into the yard where cattle or hogs are kept to secure the liquid portion of the manure there made. The only difficulty has arisen from an excess of wet in low grounds, or past meadows. Much manure may be carried on sleds after the meadows are frozen. It costs something to break it up but there is leisure now, and it should not be missed.

It is commonly stated that manures are richer when they have been constantly kept under cover. It is certain that saltpetre is found collected on barn and shed timbers when they are under cover, but never when exposed to the sun. A slight covering of manure in yards is a protection from evaporation and probably all our cow-yard manure would be richer if we could shelter them. Manure should not be kept very dry lest it burn and waste. But the manure of the cow-yard is made wet enough by cattle that run on it. Horse manure that is thrown out in piles should be mixed with other matter or it will very soon lose its virtue.

If we could afford to build sheds so as to shelter all the manure of the cow-yard we should gain much in its strength—for the great rains wash it quite too much. It is not all washed on to the farm grounds—it wastes away in the great ditches before it reaches the premises.

A FINE LOT OF HOGS. Mr. Buckley Moore of Framingham sent us a post of pork to market last week as we have seen for a long time. They attracted much attention as they were exhibited in South Market St. by Mr. Lewis Lincoln, who brought them into town.

The number of hogs was eight, and they averaged more than five hundred each. The whole eight weighed four hundred and forty-two pounds. One weighed 625 pounds. The following is an exact list of the whole. We learn that several of these had litters of pigs last summer.

No. 1—485	No. 3—439
No. 2—399	No. 6—448
No. 3—390	No. 7—436
No. 4—520	No. 8—625

CORRESPONDENCE.

(For the Framingham.)
ESSEX COUNTY REPORT ON ORCHARDS.

MA. EDITOR.—It is enclosed remarks on Fruit Trees, &c., by the committee in Essex county, and which, I think, will be of great value to farmers, more extensively read than any other journal among our farmers, they are at your service. Several of the committee have had much practical experience in orchards of their own, and have learned what they could, in the orchards of others.

Very respectfully and truly yours,
J. W. PROCTOR.

Danvers, Nov. 23, 1850.

ON FRUIT TREES.

The committee visited in the course of the season, the several orchards and plantations of fruit trees, to which their attention was called, viz: Dr. Royal A. Merriam's, Wm. G. Lake's and Francis Pettigill's in Topsfield, Francis Dodge's and Lewis Allen's, in Danvers, and Amos Gould's in Wenham, and others to which they were not specially invited.

The statements of the several claimants will best explain the particular quality of the orchards. The committee will add a few remarks expressive of their own impressions. But two parcels of pear trees were presented to their attention. Mr. Pettigill's trees were set in 1846, immediately after the premium was offered. Care was taken by him to obtain trees of fine quality, and of the best varieties of fruit, from Mr. Manning's nursery. They were set in a soil admirably adapted to their growth, and have since been watched with the best attention. They have grown remarkably well, nearly all the trees being now thrifty, and in bearing condition. In the intermediate spaces between the trees, an orchard of peach trees has been cultivated at the same time, which have been highly productive of some of the best varieties of peaches that we have met. The committee were highly gratified with the success of Mr. Pettigill's experiment,

and can with confidence refer to it, as a good illustration of what can be done by intelligent culture of this kind of fruit. Some of the best of the best varieties of pears presented at the exhibition of fruits in Salem, grew upon these trees, that have been set within the last five years. The committee are pleased to award the first premium of ten dollars to Mr. Pettigill, for the number of trees set within the last five years.

Mr. Merriam exhibited to the committee some handsome pear trees, that have been cultivated with much care and attention. With the appearance of these trees they were well pleased. The committee awarded to him the number one, as being the best of the number one, and the number two, as being the best of the number two, and the number three, as being the best of the number three, and the number four, as being the best of the number four, and the number five, as being the best of the number five, and the number six, as being the best of the number six, and the number seven, as being the best of the number seven, and the number eight, as being the best of the number eight, and the number nine, as being the best of the number nine, and the number ten, as being the best of the number ten, and the number eleven, as being the best of the number eleven, and the number twelve, as being the best of the number twelve, and the number thirteen, as being the best of the number thirteen, and the number fourteen, as being the best of the number fourteen, and the number fifteen, as being the best of the number fifteen, and the number sixteen, as being the best of the number 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